

REPORT OF THE MADRAS ESTATES LAND ACT COMMITTEE

PART III

PRICE-LEVELS AND GRAPHS



MADRAS
PRINTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT, GOVERNMENT PRESS

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1938

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LAND REVENUE (RENT) AND PRICE LEVELS.

A general history of the rise and fall of price levels has been given in the report under the head of "Commutations." Under the head of "Famines" it has been dealt with elsewhere, how the crops failed completely or partially either owing to drought, or famine or floods and the ryots lost not merely crops but their houses, cattle and all other goods. Since 1802, until this date, there had been periodical famines and also the fall in prices. It has also been pointed out under the head of "Irrigation Works and Repairs," what cost had been incurred by the landholders in maintaining old works or constructing new works and how, out of proportion, was the enhancement of land revenue to the cost of repairs and new constructions even as a matter of fact.

The next material that must be placed on record to enable the legislatures and the Government to understand how the enhancement of rents had been made during the last 136 years, even when the price levels did not justify any such enhancements, are the graphs. For this purpose we have got graphs prepared for each district and also the whole Presidency showing the price levels during the last 136 years. In the district graphs there are some gaps because the information could not be obtained for some districts. The Presidency graph is practically complete. On a study of the price levels given in the graphs for each district and also the Presidency that are annexed to this volume, it can be clearly seen how the enhancement of the land revenue was made in periods in which the ryots were unable to pay even the existing taxes on account of the fall in prices.

Before we go to the graphs we give below two statements prepared by us from out of the graphs, one for the Northern and Western districts and the other for the Southern districts, showing the price levels in the districts containing zamindari tracts for certain typical faslis which stand as important landmarks in the history of the price movements on account of the following causes :—

- (1) Development of roads and communications.
- (2) The establishment of ports and the increased exports from the province.
- (3) The construction of railways in the south by loans floated in England.
- (4) The construction of irrigation works in the Godavari, Kistna and Tanjore by loans floated in England.
- (5) The consequent mintage of silver and the institution of paper currency in 1860 to enable a freer and larger circulation of money for employment and trade.
- (6) The beginnings of survey and settlement operations.
- (7) Famines and floods.
- (8) Wars.

A careful study of this will show the periods during which enhancements of land-revenue had been made when there was absolutely no justification. The statements also show the periods during which the price movements were high. Whenever the prices rose it was not due to any improvements made by the landholders by way of maintaining irrigation works or constructing new ones. On the other hand, such rise was due to the causes above mentioned.

Variations in prices in the northern districts.

(In rupees per garce.)

Presidency.				Ganjam.				Vizagapatam.				Godavari—East and West.				Kistna.		
Fasli.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
At the time of the permanent settlement (fasli 1211) or	103	124	..	117	..	..	..	..	64	61	61	62	..	..	..	..	..	..
Nearest fasli 1218
Fasli 1262	67	84	..	72	49	..	51	44	52	44	46	55	63	45	53	61
Fasli 1269	135	156	..	151	79	127	111	101	93	104	99	107	91	98	86	96
Fasli 1274	196	227	..	210	112	178	140	140	151	186	156	170	111	177	113	165
Fasli 1275	210	260	..	231	189	343	229	285	209	236	222	239	140	175	149	167
Fasli 1290	146	153	..	150	..	..	113	93	..	105	121	125	134	..	123	134
Fasli 1313	169	168	..	155	129	..	..	142	139	..	126	137	155	156	129	151
Fasli 1316	255	298	..	300	225	..	..	275	233	..	264	276	254	297	236	283
Fasli 1317	275	315	..	318	261	..	..	350	271	..	326	398	272	337	290	330
Fasli 1329	530	758	..	673	438	..	..	668	493	..	565	562	544	673	481	598
Fasli 1340	267	306	..	288	229	..	..	223	267	..	295	275	240	299	263	267
Fasli 1343	183	227	..	220	156	..	..	172	153	..	186	192	160	196	148	170
Fasli 1345	227	314	..	286	183	..	..	251	185	..	256	286	205	276	227	233

	Kistna —cont.		Nellore.				North Arcot—North Arcot and Chittoor.				Chingleput.				Guntur.			
	Cumbi.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholan.	Cumbi.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholan.	Cumbi.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholan.	Cumbi.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholan.	Cumbi.	Ragi.
	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)	(30)	(31)	(32)	(33)	(34)	(35)	(36)	(37)
At the time of the permanent settlement (fasli 1211) or	142	180	253	..	..	133	..	..	..	..	..	..	204	..	..	..
Nearest fasli 1218	85	..	78	68	86	..	74	51	72	69	71	64	90	96	86	106	83	75
Fasli 1262	115	126	160	138	133	115	155	157	157	122	170	201	160	..	..	..
Fasli 1269	210	177	184	207	188	183	168	218	196	184	172	214	219	193	..	..
Fasli 1274	198	179	186	197	197	177	181	216	241	231	192	212	268	245	..	..
Fasli 1275	161	130	147	175	175	150	138	182	165	150	166	194	179	142	..	..
Fasli 1290	149	..	158	168	154	150	162	216	165	190	152	..	183	..	161	131
Fasli 1313	272	286	216	310	303	287	249	343	307	331	253	..	340	255	291	242
Fasli 1316	302	343	259	356	354	329	278	354	306	300	308	..	350	261	337	316
Fasli 1317	613	659	494	811	750	682	513	..	677	740	268	..	700	492	828	739
Fasli 1329	305	287	240	309	316	266	213	..	286	283	231	..	311	271	349	370
Fasli 1340	189	196	187	235	245	218	198	..	211	271	188	..	258	166	237	269
Fasli 1343	270	274	225	277	265	252	232	..	292	302	210	..	280	225	329	338
Fasli 1345	211	..	257	283	..	..	..	..	..	271

Variations in prices in the southern districts.

(In rupees per garce.)

Fasli.	Presidency.				Tanjore.				Trichinopoly.				Madura—Madura and Ramnad.				
	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	
Fasli 1211 or the nearest fasli to the permanent settlement	103	124	..	117	* 95	112	87	100	88	..	..	..	† 85	52	68	75
Fasli 1262	67	84	..	72	62	97	70	64	75	76	87	75	71	58	67	60	
Fasli 1269	135	156	..	151	119	218	129	124	157	188	172	172	148	129	129	144	
Fasli 1274	196	227	..	210	177	220	174	178	197	194	191	178	242	239	221	236	
Fasli 1275	210	260	..	281	184	241	214	202	205	211	225	217	258	273	257	275	
Fasli 1290	146	153	..	150	137	..	155	147	136	..	144	146	151	147	150	150	
Fasli 1313	..	169	168	..	155	172	..	177	171	170	159	182	157	166	180	159	
Fasli 1314	..	255	298	..	300	248	..	340	339	275	327	361	330	267	364	312	296
Fasli 1317	..	275	315	..	318	276	..	328	335	290	305	354	309	285	334	320	293
Fasli 1329	..	530	758	..	673	492	..	730	687	561	738	747	711	565	709	801	732
Fasli 1340	..	267	306	..	288	270	..	431	303	294	300	341	317	291	319	371	297
Fasli 1343	..	183	227	..	220	162	..	284	211	188	229	252	218	274	292	356	293
Fasli 1345	..	227	314	..	286	215	..	399	313	234	325	307	287	278	362	325	303

	Tinnevelly.				Coimbatore.				Salem.				South Arcot.				
	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	Paddy.	Cholam.	Cumbu.	Ragi.	
(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)	(29)	(30)	(31)	(32)	(33)		
Fasli 1211 or the nearest fasli to the permanent settlement	83	..	..	..	† 71	77	69	70	* 98	84	69	92	* 79	118	98	92
Fasli 1262	85	85	86	74	75	81	66	68	63	76	65	62	65	73	80	97	
Fasli 1269	147	158	145	195	217	257	187	193	152	178	118	169	123	159	150	147	
Fasli 1274	270	325	310	297	231	251	269	209	187	197	174	168	165	177	174	171	
Fasli 1275	272	336	334	304	255	318	269	279	206	254	228	232	177	237	203	204	
Fasli 1290	182	164	158	148	149	179	137	141	163	184	164	156	136	145	148	148	
Fasli 1313	..	189	204	242	171	193	192	157	154	168	174	162	143	165	179	174	
Fasli 1316	..	263	331	338	320	258	364	305	319	265	362	300	295	265	350	358	349
Fasli 1317	..	274	322	325	282	294	343	302	300	273	364	332	314	279	368	349	349
Fasli 1329	..	543	750	737	601	593	722	631	624	599	819	756	706	509	..	702	700
Fasli 1340	..	270	318	329	293	334	380	332	319	290	341	358	279	259	331	297	297
Fasli 1343	..	183	191	234	190	212	272	242	219	192	234	263	207	183	229	245	241
Fasli 1345	..	230	338	321	282	271	381	338	320	264	346	354	303	218	298	295	284

* These figures are prices of fasli 1218.

† These figures are prices of fasli 1212.

Having explained the object and the scope of the statements printed above, we shall now give the graphs themselves below, which can be referred to for understanding the conditions readily.